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Montana's Delegates

to

The White House Conference
on
Children.

December 13-18, 1970

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 * Montana's delegates to the 1970 White
 * House Conference on Children submit
 * these reports for the use of:
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 * Governor Forrest H. Anderson
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 * Montana's Congressional Delegation
 * in Washington D.C.
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 * Members of the 42nd Montana
 * Legislative Assembly
 *
 * Montana Council on Human Resources
 *
 * Montana Advisory Committee on
 * Children and Youth
 *
 * Any and all citizens and groups
 * who want to help improve situations
 * for Montana's children and youth.
 *
 * Reports for this publication were com-
 * piled by Miss Gerry Fenn, Community
 * Planning Coordinator, Children and
 * Youth Programs, Helena, Montana. Carol
 * Block did the typing, "Tork" Toresdahl,
 * the duplicating, and Vicki McHenry
 * designed the cover.
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Montana delegates to the White House Conference
on Children held December 13 - 18, 1970 in
Washington D.C. prepared their reports according
to the following outline.

REACTIONS to the national positions and
the recommendations of the FORUM in which
the delegate participated.

APPRAISAL of the total White House Conference
on Children.

IMPLEMENTATION in Montana. One specific
action which should be taken in Montana,
above all others.

SIGNIFICANT HAPPENING in Montana. An example
of something significant happening in Montana
to help solve children and youth problems.

FORUM 3

EXPRESSIONS of IDENTITY: the SCHOOL-AGE CHILD

Jerry Spalding

Reactions to Recommendations

At the 1970 White House Conference on Children I attended the FORUM entitled "Expressions of Identity: the School-Age Child." Most of the recommendations of my FORUM were in the form of general policy statements. These can be useful only if they are defined in terms which can be put into action on the community level. This is our next task in Montana.

One proposal is to enhance a child's identity by involving children as active participants in the decision-making process in institutions and programs that affect children. Another proposal is that already existing cross-age assistance projects be continued and expanded. This includes tutoring and other youth-assisting-youth programs.

A further recommendation to strengthen the child's sense of identity is the artist-teacher concept. This proposal recognizes the fact that there are people in the community with various talents who can be of value in a school setting. These people can offer the child a chance to see himself in the various roles he is playing and will play in the future and opportunities to enhance his self-concept through creative expression.

It was further stressed in our FORUM that the emotional and physical aspects of man as well as the intellectual should be developed in our schools.

More widespread use of our natural resources through summer camps was stressed. The interesting idea of summer camps for the entire family was also introduced. This would tend to strengthen the family unit by teaching the family members how to function and be happy together.

There is a need for more big brother-big sister programs. However, there is the greater need to strengthen the child's family because it is that institution from which children learn to be happy or sad. Family life is disintegrating in the United States and we must turn the tide and strengthen our families. Our FORUM suggested "homes without failure" via a parenting education system. This would involve the services of individuals whose focus is teaching families new options of child-rearing, conflict-resolution, and parental identity growth. We prepare very diligently for other roles in society but most often neglect proper preparation for the most important role of parent.

Another suggestion from our FORUM is the gatekeeper family. This suggests a second family to which a child can turn to share or to seek help.

(over)

Care must be taken here not to weaken the child's bonds with his own family. Parents must be brought back into the lives of their children and children meaningfully into the lives of their parents.

A final proposal, I would suggest, is that the human family as a whole strengthen itself. We must all strive hard to be social workers to the extent that we show kindness, understanding, and a willingness to take action to help our fellow men. These words we must turn into action.

Overall Appraisal

Generally, I believe the 1970 White House Conference on Children is valuable. The entire proposals of the Conference will be published shortly and these should be carefully examined. Many of the proposals I have suggested in my brief report can be implemented in Montana. The next step is to develop plans for action. We must not allow the words spoken by this Conference to collect dust and die. The needs of children in Montana are too great to go unmet.

Specific Action in Montana

I intend to help solve the problems of America's children by acting on the problems of children in Livingston, Montana. A nation is made up of individuals and it is toward those individuals in trouble which I must direct my knowledge and energy.

Significant Happening in Montana

Editor's Note: See Jerry Spalding's paper on "Group Work with Children" which describes his work as a male homemaker in Park County, Montana.

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FORUM 4

CRISIS IN VALUES

Joseph H. Roe

Time was when parental values, with regard to living in most of its aspects, became a part of the child's guideline for living. At present, as reflected by youth, this is no longer the case.

Values with respect to religion and worship of God are not considered important to a large segment of our youth population.

Values with regard to sex are drifting rapidly in the direction of the single standard combined with permissiveness on the part of many young people. The current statistics, with regard to the sexually-active youth between 13 and 18, bear this out.

Statistics with regard to serious crime do not support the value that it is better that youth put up with frustration now for gratification later on. We are moving in the direction of "let's satisfy the impulse of the 'Now-Generation'."

Values with regard to marriage are changing and in the direction that marriage vows do not seem to be impressive to many young, married couples. It is not important to an increasing number of youth that "to have and to hold until death do us part" means much.

Values with respect to loyalty to country are changing when we look at the number of young people who believe in avoiding the draft at all costs, even fleeing to foreign countries.

I think there are other values involved, but this beginning should give us food for thought as to the meaning this may have for the generation of children coming up and those who are on the threshold of the future.

FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a President's Advisory Commission on Children to help ensure that public and private programs dealing with the welfare of children reflect affirmative values.
2. Promote the use of multi-media techniques to teach children how to make affirmative value implications.
3. Prepare and distribute videotape dialogues that will facilitate communication between children and parents.
4. Train teachers how to be more effective in helping children develop their critical faculties regarding value implications.



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FORUM 5

The FUTURE of LEARNING: INTO the TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Jerry Dalton

Reactions to Recommendations

The recommendation of FORUM 5, "The Future of Learning", as stated in a release called "Back-up Statements of Major Recommendations" of the White House Conference on Children is: "The establishment of a Department of Education with Cabinet status, backed by a National Institute of Education."

The purpose is to set national education policies, "provide massive implementation of what we know as good quality education," promote constructive change and experimentation in education, increase Federal appropriations for education, and insist on public accountability. The goal of each of these actions is to help "develop each individual's potential to the full."

My reaction to this recommendation is much like my reaction to most recommendations of other FORUMS. There may be value in having stronger Federal programs in education and other areas of concern, but the service is delivered to its consumer on the local level. Most nitty-gritty constructive progress is made on the grassroots level.

Futhermore, I do not know how to influence the Federal power structure in any way beyond writing my Congressmen, even for the purpose of securing needed appropriations. Nobody at the Conference on Children seemed to know how to manipulate the Federal power structure. The general attitude seemed to be "All we have to do is send our recommendations to President Nixon and our problems will be solved."

Some persons changed during the Conference to an attitude of questioning what could happen in their state or city, but none from outside Montana that I directly encountered were exploring what they personally could do at home. Therefore, I am very skeptical about the likelihood of this recommendation becoming an actual Federal program without someone influencing the power structure on behalf of children and education.

I am even more skeptical about the value of such a program without a great deal of planning on the State and local level where most of the actual work will be carried out. This recommendation and others say nothing about exactly who is to do what, when and how. Although the ideals stated may be valuable, these are very easy recommendations to shelve and forget.

Recommendations that I would like to add to FORUM 5, I direct to myself for my own action. One way that early elementary education can be improved is to add volunteer teacher aides to kindergarten through fourth grades. These volunteers could be high school and college students and

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young adults of both sexes. Any person any age should be considered. The main criteria for volunteers should be an attitude that young children have a great deal of curiosity and can and will learn on their own. Each child needs most to be encouraged in his own interests.

Young children develop 80% of all the intellectual capacity that they will ever have in their lifetime by age eight. This is evidence that a child most needs to be encouraged and made to feel secure in his own learning. Volunteers could be helpful in the encouraging role. I intend to ask the staff of the Superintendent of Public Instruction if this has been done before, how extensively, and how helpful it was considered. I also plan to offer myself as a volunteer at the Rocky Elementary School in Billings, Montana, in February, 1971.

Teacher education certainly needs to be improved in Montana colleges. Most students in education fields that I have talked with feel much of what is required by state law for certification is not helpful to them in the classroom. I intend to discuss teacher certification requirements with Mrs. Dolores Colburg's staff, along with investigating the possible value of a National Institute of Education, and take a look at how much the American Indian has been recognized in Montana and U.S. History classes.

I will specifically recommend that American Indian History be taught in all Montana schools as a separate class or significant part of Junior and Senior High School history classes, and integrated into social studies in lower grades. These classes should be taught by Indian persons in all possible cases.

A question of appropriations within Montana for education needs to be considered. Are funds being evenly distributed between age groups in the public education system? Should appropriations to the University system continue at their present disproportionate high rate? Should young children be a higher priority at the point in their lives when they are learning the most in the shortest amount of time in their entire life? I think children 12 years and younger should be a higher Montana priority.

Overall Appraisal

I feel positive about the White House Conference on Children because participating in it helped me sharpen my perception of the top priority issues of children in Montana, namely parenting and education. I was also able to get better acquainted with the other Montana delegates which will help me when working with them in the future. Finally, I discovered my ideals for what they are, and now do not feel I should stand behind those ideals so strictly, but pursue action that will bring about improvements however small.

For the purpose of pinpointing concrete courses of action on behalf of and with children, I question whether there should be a 1980 White House Conference on Children. Many people came with their own axes to grind. Many people came with frustration and anger that had to be expressed. Some came because it was a political honor to be able to attend. Not enough people came with an attitude of "what can I do when I get home."

(more)

The general plans for the Conference were well done, but not enough methods were provided by leaders in the small work groups of 20 or less persons to help people discover what they themselves could do on the local level. For an equal amount of time, energy, and money invested, I do not think a similar 1980 Conference can hold itself accountable.

Regional conferences could be much more valuable. Such conferences could benefit from exchanging information between States, and could be oriented toward local action, while still making national recommendations.

The 1970 Conference has been valuable to Montana as a focal point for all the efforts of the past months (involving over 5,000 Montanans) on behalf of children, spearheaded by the formation of the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth. I am excited about the next step -- more work to improve Montana.

Specific Action in Montana

The single most important action that should be taken in Montana is to help parents learn how to be better parents. This can be done on a local basis, possible with small groups of parents of children, and youth who work with children, e.g., babysitters. These small groups of 10 or so persons (possibly a group in each city block) may wish to determine their priorities and may wish to seek advice from appropriate resource persons in the local community (nurses, social workers, educators, retired persons). An additional way to help parents be better parents may be to expand existing programs now at some hospitals for parents of newborn babies.

Significant Happening in Montana

One very positive thing that is going on with some Montana youth has been happening on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. The "Buffalo Shield Society" is a group of Blackfeet Indian youth who have learned much about their own culture from adults of the tribe. They tell about and demonstrate in costume several Indian ceremonies. Some of the youth are teachers in adult education classes.

A number of the youth are planning an Indian Youth Conference near Browning at the edge of Glacier Park. They will live Indian style, hosting white youth. Games and skills of the Indian culture will be played, demonstrated, and learned. The date is tentatively mid-July, 1971.

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FORUM 5

The FUTURE of LEARNING, INTO the TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Stanley Wiegand

Reactions to Recommendations

The FORUM I participated in was "The Future of Learning: Into the Twenty-first Century." The main recommendation that came out of my FORUM was the establishment of a Department of Education with Cabinet status. It was felt that more Federal funding should be implemented to salvage school districts that are collapsing and implement quality education that has public accountability. School was brought out as a concept, not a place.

I support the idea that school is a concept and not just a place. We have many facets of school, not just the ones that we consider the public institution. Also I feel that we have many theories of what quality education should be that have never been put into effect. These theories should be experimented with and perfected before they are tried on a large scale like in a whole school or school system. Many times ideas are tried before they are perfected just for the sake of change and they consequently fail. I am not in favor of a Cabinet Department of Education because I feel that it will take away control of education at the local level.

Overall Appraisal

The thing that impressed me most about the Conference was the power struggle that went on during the Conference and the number of ideas and recommendations. In fact I feel that some of the recommendations are so general that they are useless.

I feel that the White House Conference was successful because it awakened many people to the problems of children and I am hoping that the recommendations are not just shoved aside and not acted upon. One thing that was brought out was that if the recommendations were to mean anything, we must act on them on the local level.

Specific Action in Montana

I feel the one thing that should be done in Montana is the continuation of the setting up of mental health facilities for children. Examples are the Regional Mental Centers, and possibly county mental health facilities for in the schools.

Significant Happening in Montana

One of the most significant things that is going on for the benefit of children is the effort by the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth to coordinate youth programs and provide for exchange of information about them. I am hoping that this exchange of information will provide a basis of fact so that people in youth programs don't have to go through and make the same mistakes and duplicate things that someone else has done.

FORUM 7

The RIGHT TO READ

Vicki McHenry

Reactions to Recommendations

The major recommendation of the "Right to Read" FORUM in which I participated was that, "The Right to Read effort be established as a top national priority supported by special legislation and funding commensurate with its critical importance."

The "Right to Read" effort was launched in September 1969. The goals for the program include creating a national awareness of the problem; national coordination of research; rapid improvement of teacher education; development of effective instructional materials; integration of school experiences with home and community resources; and the adoption of modern management procedures within the education sector.

This program is one which I feel can have an even greater impact because of its support by the present administration. If the goals of the program are obtained, the result should be an increase in the national literacy level. I therefore support these recommendations because I feel that it is a necessity for everyone in our society to have the skill as well as the opportunity to read.

One of the most important parts of my FORUM's recommendation included changes in the teacher education program. Some of the significant changes that were suggested and which I can support include making the teacher education program a five year program.

One of these years would have the course work devoted to the teaching of reading. Another year would be used as an internship in the public schools with observation and work at each grade level. I feel that this year of internship could more accurately demonstrate the ability of the teacher to relate to children both inside and outside the classroom. As a personal view, I would suggest that teacher education also be made relevant to teaching the expected grade levels.

The "Right to Read" effort has a great potential but will succeed only as well as it is implemented in each State and community.

Overall Appraisal

The structure of the White House Conference on Children let each person attending the Conference experience a variety of procedures and exposures. However, I feel that the value of the White House Conference on Children is not in the Conference itself, but rather in the contributions it made to each delegate's desire to work toward the solutions of the problems in their own State and community.

Many of the people whom I came in contact with during the Conference were more than willing to share their ideas and experiences with others and in many cases had a particular cause that they were supporting.

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I believe many of the delegates realized that these recommendations to the President would probably not receive any national action, but many of them failed to see themselves as key people to bring about the changes discussed in their home states. When questioned about plans for future "grassroots" action, few offered suggestions for implementation.

Many of the ideas discussed at the White House Conference on Children supported similar ones that have been discussed in Montana during the past eighteen months.

Again I would like to emphasize that I feel the value of the White House Conference on Children will not be found in the final reports and recommendations of the Conference or on the national level but in the individual action that each delegate takes in his or her own area.

Specific Action in Montana

The one action that I feel should be taken at the State level is the creation of public kindergarten and adequate additional funding for all school systems that want it. These kindergartens should be expected to maintain the same standards as all other grades in elementary schools especially in reference to certified teachers.

A community level project that I would like to help develop would be the use of teacher aides in the classroom with special emphasis on elementary education. These teacher aides could be parents, college or high school students or other interested persons.

After serving as a teacher aide for first and second grade pupils, I have come to realize the value they can be to both teacher and students alike. I am not sure of what is being done in my community, but I plan to see what I can do to encourage the establishment of a teacher aide program, if it is acceptable to the teachers and parents.

Significant Happening in Montana

I think the most significant thing happening in Montana to help solve children and youth problems centers around the work of the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth. This group of fifty-two citizens (one half youth and one half adult) and their coordinator have been working on task groups concerning Montana's children and youth problems. They have worked on many aspects of our State's problems ranging from Indian-White relations to lack of activity for our youth. Not only has the whole committee worked on the solutions, but many of the individuals on the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth have made significant contributions in their own communities through their own actions.

As a returning delegate from the White House Conference on Children I see one of my roles as working with the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth because I feel Montana has a genuine need for the continuance of this work. It is my hope that in 1980 the delegates attending the White House Conference on Children will look back on the work done since the 1970 Conference and say that Montana's children have benefitted from it.

FORUM 8

CONFRONTING MYTHS of EDUCATION

Dorothy Butterfly

Reactions to Recommendations

The recommendation of my FORUM called for, "Federal support for independent research and dissemination of information on existing and alternate forms of education."

What this recommendation would entail would be the establishment or the improvement of schools that would be fluid enough to accomodate the individual's differences of style, his attitudes and readiness.

The FORUM 8 recommendation encourages and supports independent investigations and critical evaluations of educational programs, motives, goals, systems, and practices currently in use and suggests experimental models for future use. This research would explore for example the extent and validity of the alleged myths and misconceptions governing our educational culture.

I fully support the recommendations of FORUM 8. Montana and the entire country could benefit so much if the full potential of all children was released. So much of the creativity and self-worth of children could be "crunched" if they are not given the opportunity to develop and express their individualness.

Overall Appraisal

For me the Conference was a success. I feel that my FORUM group, only through hard work and confrontation, was able to arrive at recommendations that we felt were important and needed. I also believe this to be true of the entire Conference.

But the true measure of this Conference's success is whether or not the delegates use the recommendations to improve their community environments for children.

Implementation in Montana

The most important action that can be taken in Montana would be the evaluation of our schools around the State.

A workshop could be held where parents, educators, students, and the community work together to evaluate and investigate the problems and successes that the school in their area has had in educating the children, youth and adults.

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This community could then establish an alternative educational model that would have education more relevant to the needs, potential, culture and environment of every child in that school!

Significant Happening in Montana

I believe that the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth has been a positive force in the lives of Montana's children and youth. Since the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth is an action-oriented group the implementation of the White House Conference on Children recommendations will be a top priority of this committee.

American Indian Caucus

Among the many minority caucuses that originated at the White House Conference, I was a part of the American Indian Caucus.

We felt that more awareness and consideration of the Indian should result from the United States government.

For this reason, the Indian Caucus recommended that:

"All treaties made with the Indian should be honored by the United States government. We also feel that Indians should have self-determination without the termination of governmental duties and responsibilities."

My thinking on this is that we as Indian people do have and practice our culture, religion and way of life. I feel that Indian people and all peoples should be able to determine for themselves the extent to which they will practice their culture, without infringing on other people's rights.

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FORUM 10

KEEPING CHILDREN HEALTHY: HEALTH PROTECTION and DISEASE PREVENTION

Harriet Anderson

Reactions to Recommendations

The national recommendation calling for the reordering of priorities at all levels of American society, so that children and families come first, seems crucial to me. The emphasis that has been placed on war, foreign assistance, space exploration and the elderly has detracted from assuring that the needs of all children are being met. We need to focus on ways to strengthen family life, improve our educational system and provide comprehensive health services to all children.

The health FORUM supported a universal Federal funded health care system for all children and the development of national standards for preventative health services with each State required to establish a division for the investigation of preventable deaths in children.

High on the priority list was the expansion of current programs directed to groups of special risk--maternal and infant care programs, children and youth programs, crippled children services, services for children in remote areas, teenage expectant mothers, family planning services, services for emotionally disturbed children and arrangements for catastrophic illness.

These recommendations could be carried out immediately if programs now in existence were expanded and adequately funded. I support these recommendations, as the health needs are not being met adequately today.

Overall Appraisal

I believe the Conference was a success. All the recommendations are important, and if they are implemented our children's needs will be more fully met.

My working group was a sincere, hard working group. There was no evidence of the struggle for power which was experienced by many other groups. The Conference seemed to have overtones of discontent with the way the Conference was organized. Some individuals seemed to focus on upsetting the Conference planning committee rather than the task we were sent to accomplish.

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Implementation in Montana

In Montana, we need to find funds to continue and expand our current health programs, i.e., maternal-child programs, crippled children services, family planning. We need to find ways of better correlating the services of all agencies to prevent overlapping as well as void areas.

Significant Happening in Montana

The Seeley-Orvando-Swan Health project is providing health services to families by an independent nurse practitioner in a remote area without a physician. Montana State University School of Nursing is currently involved in a project to determine, from Montana physicians, what should be included in a course offering to prepare registered nurses to function in a more independent and extended role.

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CHANGING FAMILIES in a CHANGING SOCIETY

Helen Wendt

Reactions to Recommendations

"Changing Families in a Changing Society" titled my FORUM. This entailed many things that affect children and parents. Discussions in the four workshops found that children are discriminated against because they come from a family unfamiliar to most policy makers. The variant families are the traditional, single parent (man or woman, even unmarried single), dual work, commune, kin network, homo-sexual couple, single unmarried couple or any person that will care for a child. Many children are not tax exempted or helped with existing agencies. With the outgrowth of these different forms, the policies and legislation must be built to accomodate these diversities.

The final policy of the FORUM is to establish a people-oriented, National Institute for the Family to carry out the following functions: to serve as an advocate for families and children, provide mechanism for follow-up of the White House Conference recommendations, reorder existing service and programs to fit around desires and aspirations of families and to involve families in their development, examine existing legislation for its effect on variant family forms, take action against legislation, regulations and practices which are punitive to children because of their discriminatory policies against the integrity of families or variant forms of parenting, and assist the State or local programs for families and children.

I feel the family is the basic unit of American Society and the most common family form is the traditional family; and that this nation is and should be essentially pluralistic in its political, educational, social, and other manifestations, and so request that any forthcoming legislation be geared to the strengthening of families.

For an example there could be tax benefits and/or direct payment for members of an extended family to care for the children, either grandparents, uncles, aunts, or other kinfolk. Legislation must in no way limit the opportunities of any children regardless of family circumstances, past or present. Our group was concerned, as I am, about the discriminatory features against children of varying family forms in the Family Assistance Plan which should be revised. Discriminations are the following:

1. Children living with both parents will be eligible for a lower level of assistance than children of a single parent.
2. Children living with a single parent will have that parent required to leave the home and work while children living with both parents will only have one parent required to leave.
3. Children of a parent who refuses to work will receive a redirection in assistance.

Also the present welfare programs including Aid to Dependent Children which are inimical to the well-being of children and which vary from State to State should be revised so that interests of the children shall be the principle criteria on which programs are based. Recognition should be given to differing needs of children in various family groups and to the fact that the accident of geography or income shall not deprive children of having their essential needs met.

We in Montana should strongly work for all legal assistance (Federal) available for all deprived children to meet the basic requirements of food, shelter, clothing, a home, health services and opportunities for education. All these services should be pressed into action.

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Overall Appraisal and Implementation

The White House Conference on Children gave me a broader range of ideas, attitudes and an insight about people. The program in Washington was well planned and brought out programs that can be implemented by each State or local areas. Realizing a national program is stronger, the local and State programs can create more concern amongst themselves with an educational program for existing and future parents to better their children's lives.

I recommend the implementation throughout Montana of County or District Conferences on Children on the same pattern as the White House Conference with FORUMS and workshops formed and that schools, PTA, Youth organizations, Clubs-Fraternal and Womens, Colleges, Agency personnel or any other persons be delegates to the Conference. This brings a thought from Ugo Betti, "Everyone has, inside himself, a piece of Good News. Everyone is a very great, very important character! Every man must be persuaded, even if he is in rags, that he's immensely, immensely important." This type of program will promote new attitudes and insights to community problems and hopefully programs implemented to solve existing area problems. Also this would be a source of knowledge for our legislators and other governmental agencies.

Specific Action in Montana

The one specific action which should be taken in Montana is to establish a kindergarten program because all existing programs are discriminatory against middle income children and sparsely settled children. Day care centers are in great need for the pre-schooler; a State program is needed to prevent commercialization of day care. The overriding concern, ranked first place in the balloting at White House Conference on Children, is to develop programs for early childhood education.

Significant Happenings in Montana

One action which now exists in Montana in behalf of the "rights of children" is the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women and a correlating action of the Montana Right to Life Committee in their support of the present Montana Law that grants protection to human life. This law that protects life at any stage is to be upheld and should promote care and counseling for people suffering personal anguish. A child's right to be born should be over all as is stated in the minority recommendation FORUM 14-D, "because the taking of the life of an unwanted child by a mother today, in principle, means the taking of the life of an unwanted mother by a child tomorrow. Thus the respect for human life should not be lessened and "not dependent only on the arithmetic of votes".

Also the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth is making people aware of family problems and has promoted action in communities in the State. Their work has just started and should be encouraged. This is in harmony with a specific FORUM recommendation voted third by the Conference in Washington, "establishment of citizen community action groups to implement the multitude of excellent recommendations which have evolved out of this White House Conference on Children".

In my specific FORUM policy, the recommendation lacked support by the overall Conference because it stressed to Congress to provide appropriations to existing research and develop further needed research. The feeling of the delegates is that their proposed programs be acted on and not be used for further study. We as delegates have done this and will continue to keep the Governor, U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives, Legislators informed for them to introduce legislative action for children and families.

FORUM 15

CHILDREN and PARENTS: TOGETHER in the WORLD

Nina Hage

Reactions to Recommendations

Attendance at the White House Conference on Children made me even more aware of how fortunate I am to be living in Montana. Two States, Pennsylvania and Montana, were cited by a national magazine for their grassroots work affecting youth and children. One person from another State expressed it very well when he said, "Most States wait until there is a crisis before they begin to work. Montana is trying to avoid a crisis." We are working on the problems of children and youth but much is yet to be done.

National priorities seem to be centered on everything and anything but the children and their families. Legislation on racism and discrimination have not been enforced and families suffer. Much more money is channeled into war than to family aids. Our way of life reveals a pursuit of affluence, worship of material things, and a willingness to disregard human relationships. National priority should be the child and his family which now rates last.

FORUM 15, which I attended, recommended that a Department of Family and Children be developed with Cabinet status and that commissions on State and local levels be established and adequately funded. Responsibilities should be: coordinating services to families and children, reconstructing old programs, and developing new ones.

One new program should be convening a White House Conference on Families and Children at least every five years with ongoing activities in States and local communities and with children participating at all levels.

Other new programs should be supporting policies which provide part-time employment without discrimination, such as vacations and fringe benefits for parents who wish to spend more time with their families and assuring the right of all children to have legally responsible permanent parents.

Until such a program could be put into working order, FORUM 15 recommended support of the Office of Child Development. This covered the top recommendations of our FORUM.

Some of the overriding concerns of FORUM 15 were incorporated into the recommendations from other FORUMS. Among these were a system of child justice including the enforcement of existing laws on racism and discrimination, day care centers available to everyone run by qualified people, independent of the present school systems but with continuity and a redesigning of education systems to child-centered learning.

Also, the recommendation was made for government funds to be allocated per child rather than per school district. Although money is not the one criteria for well-adjusted children, we felt that every family should be assured of a basic income adequate for child needs. One thing our FORUM felt would be beneficial would be the separation of the Health, Education and Welfare Department into three separate departments for more efficiency to all children and their families.

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Overall Appraisal

In some ways I felt the Conference was poorly organized. I, personally, felt that the three hundred fifty or more children, chaperones and directors who were brought in on Saturday and kept there until Wednesday for the purpose of entertaining us for one evening, were an unnecessary expense especially since we were there to work and not to be entertained. I could not see where this was any addition to the overall program. One little boy on being asked who was paying for his \$6.00 breakfast of frog legs replied, "President Nixon."

I would have preferred the involvement of some local children in our workshops. One gentleman in our group remarked that children have a way of keeping people honest. Our group felt we were violating one of our recommendations that we should listen to children and involve them in making decisions that concern them.

The Conference was well managed by the participants who were sincere and all deeply interested in the problems of families. Most of them were in search of government help at all levels but all were desirous of something to take to their respective states for use. I think a great deal happened there and I would hope that much good may come of the meeting.

Specific Action and Significant Happenings in Montana

In Montana, one thing I believe we can do is to begin an educational process to cause people to think of families rather than of children and youth independent of the family unit. A first step in that direction is to work on State adoption laws to make them more lenient. Every child has the right to have a parent or parents and to be a part of a family.

With the coming Constitutional revision, an opportunity presents itself to make children and families a top priority in our State. Since the recommendation of FORUM 15 was voted to be one of the top six of the Conference I think we should continue our program in that direction.

Montana has a small staff working for children and youth and the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth which is a start. The revision of the Constitution may allow these people more power and more funding.

Many educators and other interested persons are looking critically at our education system. Benefits may be forthcoming but we have much to do. Mental health programs are being promoted in our State to help all members of families. We must get people informed, interested and involved, especially in the Indian people and other underprivileged groups.

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FORUM 15

CHILDREN and PARENTS: TOGETHER in the WORLD

Shirley Hill

Reactions to Recommendations

The name of my FORUM was "Children and Parents - Together in the World." It was an all encompassing FORUM, but concentrated on the influence the parent had in determining the environment and education of the child and how much influence the child actually had in determining his own future and education. The theme and the direction given to FORUM 15 was to "bring people back into the lives of children and children back into the lives of people."

The five recommendations from FORUM 15 were:

1. To enhance the DIGNITY and status of families and children in all phases of American life. PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVE ATTENTION MUST BE ACCORDED TO FAMILIES WHO ARE ECONOMICALLY OR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED.
2. To increase opportunities for parents, other adults, and older children to engage in meaningful activities with the young at home, in the neighborhood, in pre-school settings, in schools, and in the community at large.
3. To enhance the ABILITY, RESPONSIBILITY, and power of parents - AND OF THEIR CHILDREN AS THEY MATURE - to choose and influence the kinds of environments in which their children are growing up, including neighborhoods, pre-schools, health and welfare services, schools, churches, mass media, and recreational facilities.
4. To provide children with opportunities to accept challenging responsibilities in work and service in school, neighborhood, and community.
5. To grant children, especially teenagers, a greater measure of influence and control over activities and programs that affect them in their schools, neighborhoods, and communities.

Overall Appraisal

The Conference gave each delegate a chance to realize that there is a common media of concern for the present environment of children. One important aspect which came up in my FORUM was to work with the family unit while servicing a member of that family and work toward rehabilitating the family as a whole, rather than removing a child from an unfavorable home environment.

Specific Action in Montana

My one recommendation for action in Montana is to rehabilitate and counsel the family unit when rectifying an unfavorable home condition for the betterment of a child's environment.

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Significant Happening in Montana

One example of something significant happening in Montana to help solve children and youth problems is the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth. I have only known about the Committee since September of 1970, but I am very impressed with the real concern and creative ideas the members have for solving children and youth problems.

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FORUM 15

CHILDREN and PARENTS: TOGETHER in the WORLD

Clark Welch

Reactions to Recommendations

"The actual patterns of life in America today are such that children and families come last," is a leading statement in the Report of FORUM 15, Parents and Children: Together in the World, of the 1970 White House Conference on Children. Our society expects its citizens first of all to meet the demands of their jobs and then to fulfill civic and social obligations. Responsibilities to children are then left to spare time.

Reordering priorities in America so that we "bring people back into the lives of children and children back into the lives of people," is the consequence of any actions taken as a result of the Parents and Children FORUM. Five major objectives are recommended by FORUM 15 as follows:

1. To enhance the status of families and children in all phases of American life.
2. To increase opportunities for parents, other adults, and older children to engage in meaningful activities with the young.
3. To enhance the power of parents to choose and influence the kinds of environments in which their children are growing up.
4. To provide children with opportunities to accept challenging responsibilities in work and service in school, neighborhood, and community.
5. To grant children especially teen-agers, a greater measure of influence and control over activities and programs that affect them.

Implementation

The question is how to implement these objectives and I suggest the following as beginning steps of action:

1. That action must originate on the local level with possible support later on county, State, national or regional levels.
2. This action may support already active programs with like goals for families. Checkups of already existing programs of action need surveying, to see where cooperative and joint action may take place.
3. All possible resources of trained persons, experienced and successful persons, in helping families fulfill their roles should be utilized.

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4. This action may be begun with workshops utilizing White House Conference on Children delegates along with local resource persons in small workshops of three to five couples in learning of child development, parental roles and responsibilities, and using the wisdom of successful parents.
5. All public agencies that can support action be involved in such training to include such institutions as schools, public agencies, service clubs, churches and other resource groups or individuals.

Specific Action in Montana

I suggest that workshops to help parents or parents-to-be in understanding child development be a concrete effort as a first step of follow-up to the White House Conference on Children. Parents can become aware that there are many resources to help them in their parenting roles.

Significant Happening in Montana

The Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth is an example of significant work being done with children and youth in the State. Over 5,000 persons have been involved in some way in the resulting work of this Committee to better the lot for Montana's children and youth.

Overall Appraisal

As a participant in the White House Conference on Children and FORUM 15, I found inspiration to continue already begun programs in Montana for children and families. The exchange of information and ideas was perhaps the most helpful part of the Conference for me. I accept the recommendations of FORUM 15 as being needed in Montana and our Nation with my involvement on the local and State levels to solve the concerns raised by the FORUM and Conference.

Much will be required in effort on my part and upon all citizens to help parents and children in these changing times.

* * *

FORUM 16

FAMILY PLANNING and FAMILY ECONOMICS

Sudie Mason

Reactions to Recommendations

FORUM 16 made the following recommendation:

"To enhance the self-worth of all children and to achieve early population stabilization, we recommend consumer-determined, publicly funded programs of (1) Family Life, Sex and Population Education, and (2) Voluntary Family Planning Services and Safe Abortion Available to All."

I agree with FORUM 16's recommendation. I felt that it was in the area of sex education that I received the most help from the small group discussions of which I was a part. My other recommendations relate to that area specifically. They are as follows:

1. We need to locate and use as resource persons those people already in Montana who are trained in the field of sex education.
2. We need to train more people in sex education.
3. Communities need to develop their own programs of sex education starting where they are with what seems needed in their area.
4. We need to stress to the public that our children are getting sex education all the time - the question is from whom and what are they learning?

Several general recommendations would be:

1. Development of educational television and providing better television and radio programs for children in Montana.
2. Develop programs between education and industry which give children an opportunity to experience working and getting to know adults in everyday working situations. (Example - program done by the Detroit Free Press)

Appraisal of the Total Conference

To me and for me the Conference was a success. I especially gained from the presentations of my FORUM and our small group discussions. The people in our FORUM and discussion groups were from a wide variety of backgrounds and this made our interchange of ideas especially interesting. I also appreciated our Montana meetings in which we had an opportunity to get to know one another and share ideas.

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4. This action may be begun with workshops utilizing White House Conference on Children delegates along with local resource persons in small workshops of three to five couples in learning of child development, parental roles and responsibilities, and using the wisdom of successful parents.
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Much will be required in effort on my part and upon all citizens to help parents and children in these changing times.

* * *

DEVELOPMENTAL DAY CARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Bethine Bigej

Specific Forum Recommendation: "Quality developmental child care requires thoroughly trained personnel and parent and community control of programs."

Recommendation in Detail:

"The two most important factors in insuring quality in developmental child care are adequate training of the personnel who work with the children and the responsiveness of the programs through parent and community control.

A massive increase in training efforts is essential to meet the goal of universal availability of developmental child care. Adequate funding to provide training for at least 50,000 additional child care workers must be added annually over the next decade. Training should be directed toward trainers, professional, para-professional and volunteer staff who work directly with children, administrative and ancillary staff of child care programs, parents and youth.

A complete program should include training for parenthood in the public schools, starting before junior high school and with direct experience in child care centers. The training should include both male and female students."

True responsiveness of programs to insure quality can only be established by requiring control of individual programs by parents of the enrolled children. Parents and local communities must also control: 1) local distribution of funds, 2) community planning and coordination, and 3) monitoring and licensing functions."

1. Reactions to the national positions and recommendations of Forum 17:

I disagree with parent control. I believe parent involvement is essential but not total control as the wording indicates. The intricacies of planning, managing and operating developmental day care facilities should be placed in the professional hands of well qualified personnel who have been educated and trained for that job.

I am in full agreement with all other aspects of the detailed recommendation.

Further recommendations of Forum 17:

A task force should be established in the Office of Child Development to access the need for day care, the needs of day care and the progress made throughout the nation — annually.

Substantial federal funds should be channeled through the Office Of Child Development for "start up" programs and States should appropriate funds for quality "follow through" programs.

The Office of Child Development needs national support in guiding this Nation with quality child care services now (not to attempt to up-grade facilities and personnel later).

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Dr. Edward Zigler, Director, Office of Child Development, reported the preparation of a basic collection of simply written manuals to serve as aids to Day Care Centers:

1) Principles of Day Care, 2) Operations Manual, 3) Infancy Period, 4) Preschool Period, 5) School-Age Period, 6) Parental Involvement 7) Self-Image Programs: American Indian Programs, Black Programs, Spanish-American Programs, and Puerto-Rican Programs.

This collection of manuals should be made available to all who are now operating Day Care Centers and to all who are establishing Day Care Centers.

2. An appraisal of the total 1970 WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN:

For one who waited twenty years to attend a White House Conference on Children, this was one of the most rewarding experiences in my entire teaching career. For fifteen years I have included the history of and information gleaned from each White House Conference on Children...now I can add a personal dimension of "involvement" in the most current one!

3. Ideas for Implementation of Recommendations in Montana:

Montana should give whole-hearted support to the existing 4 C's Programs (programs sponsored by the Office of Child Development and Children's Bureau) and increase the numbers of 4 C's Programs throughout the State.

Montana should support programs training for the responsibilities for parenthood in the public schools, starting before junior high school and with direct experience in child care centers. The training should include both male and female students.

Montana should support programs at the Universities for training personnel to operate developmental day care centers and day care homes that are existing in this State with and without trained operators.

Montana should support legislation for Licensing Day Care Centers and Homes. Montana should support legislation for Certification of Day Care Operators.

4. Something Significant Happening in Montana:

A training grant FOR ADVANCING THE QUALITY OF COMMUNITY COORDINATED DAY CARE IN MONTANA was received in September, 1970...bringing together teaching faculty in the field of Child Development from three Universities of Montana (University of Montana, Montana State University and Eastern Montana College) for a leadership-training workshop in Helena. This was followed by a leader from each of the Universities conducting a workshop for Day Care Operators -- workshops held simultaneously in Helena, Great Falls and Billings. More workshops of this kind are greatly needed. Attendance at each of the three workshops for Day Care Operators was over-whelming -- interest was keen and enthusiasm was significant!

A Directory of Day Care Facilities in Montana should soon be "off the press" sponsored by the School of Home Economics at Montana State University. This directory was prepared following a Master's thesis: A SURVEY OF PRESCHOOL FACILITIES IN MONTANA by Jean Stephens Baringer, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana, August, 1970. ---

FORUM 18

CHILDREN WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Patricia George

Reaction to Recommendation

The following recommendation for the consideration of the voting delegation at the White House Conference on Children was presented:

"The development of programs to eliminate racism which cripples all children."

This recommendation became one of the 16 overriding concerns of the Conference and was rated by the delegates as the second most important concern of the 16.

Explanation

Racism permeates all elements of our society. It is within the person and cannot be rooted out by legislation. We may not even be aware of our subconscious feelings of superiority and inferiority. To rid our nation of racism, people must be made aware of how it is manifested and the damaging effects it has on our nation. A mechanism of education to assist people to become aware of their racism and to help people in ridding themselves of it must be set up. It must also be noted that the crippling effect of racism damages not only the person to whom racism is directed but the individual who harbors these feelings.

Application to Montana

The Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth's "Task Group on Discrimination", prior to the White House Conference on Children, recognized the existence of discrimination and prejudice in Montana's people not only in racism but also in attitudes toward socio-economic levels, the sexes, religion, ages, personal appearance, geographic location, educational levels, family heritage and profession or occupation.

It is realized that legislation cannot change attitudes but laws, appropriations and policies assist in providing opportunities for equal rights or education to break down existing prejudicial barriers.

Implementation of Recommendation

To help in sensitizing the people of our State to the effects of prejudice and to develop children without crippling prejudice, the following recommendations for implementation are made. It should be noted that recommendations have been selected or modified from recommendations originating from the "State Task Group on Discrimination," the original recommendations set forth by the FORUM "Children Without Prejudice" or the sub-group of this

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FORUM in which Montana had representation:

1. Communities within the State organize boards or committees that are representative of age, race, creed, socio-economic and educational levels of people in their area to identify human relations problems and implement solutions.
2. Provide programs of parent and youth leader education with encounter sessions where people face their attitudes toward others and are helped to understand the consequences of prejudice and discrimination.
3. Colleges and universities are urged to evaluate their administrative and teacher education programs and make constructive changes to deal more realistically with discrimination by providing courses and workshops to help existing and prospective educators deal with their own and student prejudices, as well as understanding the cultures and life styles of American minority groups.
4. Where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes children from effectively participating in the educational program offered by the school district, the district should aid the child through bi-lingual education with regard for the minority language.
5. Opportunities be provided for cross-cultural understanding through exchange teachers and student teachers, youth group encounters with other ethnic groups, teacher scholarships for minority students and minority resource people invited to help Montana youth and adults accept and respect human differences.

Montana has touched each of the previous recommendations by initiating some programs in institutions of learning, specific organizations or community groups, but to eliminate prejudice in children of Montana the State must increase the exposure of its citizens to their own feelings of prejudice and how they effect others, especially children.

To begin our task in this State, areas or communities should provide through existing structures or newly formed Human Resources planning groups, sessions to give opportunities for youth, parents, youth leaders and educators to sensitize and recognize their feelings of prejudice and how to effectively deal with them.

Significant Happening in Montana

These sessions could take the form of a leader training workshop similar to one held in Central Montana where the task was to orient adults working with youth to youth culture so they could be more sensitive to the needs of youth and how they could guide and work with them more effectively. This happened through the planning of a cross-section committee in the community and the funds of a Title I program to provide resource people. Innovative methods were used to create awareness and lessen barriers between age groups. This could also be done where other attitudes exist that alienate us from people of other cultures, races, ages, religions and creeds.

FORUM 19

CHILDREN and THEIR PHYSICAL and SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS

Mary Condon Gereau

Reactions to Recommendations

I spent very little time at the FORUM to which I was assigned, "Children and Their Physical and Social Environments". The subject was vague and pooling the ignorance of the delegates seemed not too productive. The FORUM Panel paper was, in my opinion, a collection of platitudes without much depth. One point disturbed me in that the paper recommended that the public schools' financial problems could be solved by rearranging the State tax structure--no mention being made of the essential role of the Federal government in providing a vastly increased share of the cost of public schools. Montana--and indeed most States--can rearrange their present tax resources until kingdom come and never meet the amount required for a quality educational program for all until the Federal government provides at least one-third of the cost of public schools.

Overall Appraisal

The total White House Conference on Children was designed, in my opinion, to be a show without substance. The refusal of the Conference director to provide opportunity for the delegates to come together, beyond the opening session, indicates his concern that the real issues, which he hoped to avoid, would be exposed. The cliches which were submitted to the delegates for balloting--without a chance to discuss and debate them--indicates the shallowness of the whole affair.

Because of my involvement with two different FORUMS in the learning cluster for a period of several months before the Conference, I was well aware that the FORUM chairmen were, in many instances, determined to play down any Federal role in programs for children, especially if substantial requests for Federal funds were involved. The delegates deserve credit for negating this strategy. However, the White House Conference on Children staff, through press exposure, particularly of Dwight Allen, chairman of FORUM 8, were able to publicize their discontent with the structure of the public school system and the "need" for alternative forms of education. This was a stacked deck from the beginning.

Specific Action in Montana

Since 1948 I have proposed that Montana provide a statewide, state supported kindergarten program. Most States are now considering pre-school programs at the pre-kindergarten level. Montana ought to move to state supported kindergartens now--with concurrent development of tax supported pre-school child development ("day care") programs in every appropriate community as the next step.

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FORUM 20

CHILD DEVELOPMENT and the MASS MEDIA

Gerry Fenn

Reactions and Recommendations

Probably more different methods were used in the White House Conference on Children than in most meetings of this type. Yet many parts of the Conference failed to involve the delegates actively and creatively or to regard them as an important resource. There was much passive listening to or observing of talks, panels, tapes, films, video tapes, slides and programs.

FORUM 20, "Child Development and the Mass Media" centered on four media which affect children: Films, Sound, Print and Television. We had workshops on each aspect and worked on recommendations which related to each. FORUM leaders labored until 4:30 a.m. on the last evening in order to reconcile and consolidate the recommendations so we could have the final report in our hands as we went home.

Leaders of my FORUM were dedicated, sincere, enjoyable and able people from whom I strove to learn. Yet in the first three work sessions, we were placed in straight rows of chairs facing the front to passively watch or listen. My resources were drawn upon for the first time in the fourth session when we evaluated four children's TV programs.

Similar to other FORUMS, we insisted, "That the President declare as a fundamental principle that there be a rearrangement of national priorities for Federal expenditures and place the critical needs of children and parents at the same high level of priority until now held by the military, and that the national government take immediate steps to implement this policy. The integrity and individuality of each human being depends on this rearrangement."

Implementation in Montana

Like many others, our FORUM asked for some kind of an implementation mechanism at the national level. This is to be a National Children's Media Foundation to actively pursue action on our recommendations. Because of my doubts about our ability to have this happen very soon, I suggest ideas which we can carry out in Montana.

1. Make the FORUM 20 report available to child development specialists, parents and mass media communicators in Montana.
2. Urge our child development specialists and mass media communicators to get together for a mutual exchange of ideas.
3. Encourage workshops to help parents and youth evaluate the effects of the various media on children.
4. Support efforts to secure educational TV in Montana.
5. Find those in Montana who are interested in the promotion of film-making by children.

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6. Locate those Montanans and stations who would like to do age-appropriate programs on radio for children.
7. Support Montana libraries in their attempts to provide inviting, challenging and enjoyable materials for children.

Overall Appraisal

In many ways, I doubt that the White House Conference on Children is any longer a viable instrument to help solve problems and improve situations affecting children and their families in this country.

Frustration comes from knowing the problems and having an awareness of many kinds of solutions, but being unable to get the needed actions. People need and want help with strategies for implementation.

For example, time could be programmed for State delegations to meet and work with Senators and Representatives and their staffs at a time when Congress is not under terrific pressure.

Likewise delegates could have program time to meet (Do actual lobbying) with the staffs of Federal departments and bureaus whose work affects children. This could be augmented by daily meetings of State and Regional groups.

Montanans benefited from the exposure to urban situations and the chance to press for understanding of rural problems. Also, Montana delegates had opportunities to test their understanding of the reasons for the anger and desperation of many kinds of minorities.

Montana delegates knew each other and discovered that their State was among the few holding a preparatory workshop for the delegation. They gained confidence and inspiration to tackle the jobs at home.

Specific Action in Montana

One important action which should be taken in Montana is to "Help parents be better parents". If you can't blame anyone else for a child's situation, the parent gets it. But who steps forward to help parents?

To begin with, each community in Montana could sponsor workshops in series and/or other types of sessions where parents of children under 13 years are combined with youth who are associated with children or interested in working with them.

Significant Happening in Montana

The Central Montana Human Resources Committee which has sponsored programs, projects and other actions since 1964 is an example of something which could operate in each of Montana's 12 proposed multi-county districts.

FORUM 21

The CHILD and LEISURE TIME

Alice Berner

I was assigned to the Cluster of Communities and Environments and the FORUM concerning "The Child and Leisure Time."

The basic goal of my Cluster was, "A child is largely a product of his environment--both physical and social. As the child spends increasingly longer periods outside the home, it becomes essential that we understand the impact of community and environmental factors upon his attitudes, values and behavior."

My FORUM outlined some ideas of concern such as "whether there should be more structured activities for children or whether we should consider the possibilities of a more unstructured life style for children, allowing for greater 'free time.'" It also attempted to identify what kinds of participatory activities appeal to children and how families, organizations and communities can help involve the child in more meaningful experiences during these 'free time' periods.

Our FORUM divided into eight working groups with from 8 to 15 people in each. We worked on a pre-written "working copy" with the purpose of modifying it as we desired. We presented our priorities to the entire FORUM as did the other groups and then voted on the one priority that we felt to be the most important.

Our group, after much discussion, decided on these goals and submitted all of them to the FORUM as we felt one could not be separated from the others without losing something from each.

Recognizing that leisure is an extremely important resource, our basic goal is to provide a total leisure climate designed to facilitate normal psychological, social, physical, and intellectual growth and development of every American child. The community as well as Federal, State, and local institutions should share the responsibility of ensuring that wide varieties of beneficial leisure opportunities are provided for children. Specific goals are:

1. Eliminate attitudinal obstacles to the delivery of constructive leisure opportunities to all.
2. Set priorities that will close the gap in leisure opportunities.
3. Eliminate institutional obstacles, coordinate all planning efforts, and establish some mechanism for effective contact between institutions and local communities.
4. The actual delivery of programs and services should be decentralized and recipient family and community members, including children, should be encouraged to participate in determining the specific leisure climate.
5. Encourage diverse forms of leisure expression, as every child has a right to privacy.

After the FORUM voted on the one priority from the recommendations of the eight work groups, we submitted it to our Cluster for a vote.

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From the final results of the voting the recommendation which received the most votes was:

"Provide opportunities for every child to learn, grow, and live creatively by reordering national priorities."

Many of our recommendations were rewritten but we did try to urge some of our pet ideas into some of the final drafting. We really worked to be sure that the word "creatively" was entered.

In our work group we felt that there was a drastic need for the change of attitudes toward leisure time. Our second priority was the realization that leisure be considered a basic need, but with some understanding of the word, "leisure", and some concepts as to how to use it in a constructive, creative and fulfilling manner.

I generally agree with the basic goals and concepts of my work group and FORUM, and hope to put some of the ideas into practice in my home area and to find some way to work with the 16 County Eastern Montana Development Association. First, I hope to help set up some workshops that will involve all age groups and racial groups. From these workshops I hope to accomplish first a change in attitudes about all phases of children and youth concerns. This is the first step needed all over Montana to accomplish the goals in most of the communities on many of the concerns and problems affecting children and youth.

The goal - changing attitudes - is one which the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth has accomplished in quite a sizable measure in the past few months with the work done with different groups in different parts of the State. Therefore, I believe Montana is off and running as far as recognizing the concerns and problems affecting youth. Hopefully we will have the opportunity to stimulate action in the communities where attitudes have changed and they are ready to accept some responsibility. Also, we have the machinery to help implement ideas through the use of our multi-county planning associations. I am personally very proud of Montana as we are beginning to try some new concepts. I found while talking to people from different parts of the nation that they did not have this type of machinery available through which to do some long range planning with the hope of implementation by the involvement of people.

I would like to say thank you to Governor Forrest H. Anderson for appointing me to go to Washington, D.C. to the White House Conference on Children. This was a great experience but the real value as far as I am personally concerned is the appointment to the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth where I have learned so much and have had the opportunity to work with such wonderful people from all over the State of Montana, with a special thanks to Gerry Fenn who has given so much to all of us in the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth.

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FORUM 23

CHILDREN in TROUBLE: ALTERNATIVES to DELINQUENCY, ABUSE and NEGLECT

Charlotte Kilroy

The White House Conference FORUM 23 meetings, and work-study groups, gave the delegates insight in what is being done successfully in other parts of the nation in working with children in trouble and in need. Problems and possible recommendations came from experts who work in the field, and from children themselves who came as consultants to tell us what had happened to them (some were still institutionalized, and some had been in institutions). Through films shown by Howard James on detention facilities and institutions around the country, we saw some of the shocking happenings to our young people, and the needs of people who are working with these children in trouble. The Conference, from the standpoint of my area of interest, was very good -- but the test comes now, in whether or not we did and can continue to focus national attention on children, and whether we as delegates can focus enough community interest and involvement to attempt to better the situation in our own State and communities.

One recommendation of our FORUM was that "Whereas one-fourth of the population of the United States is children, we recommend that all children receive their proportionate share of the Federal budget". We as a nation can shift our focus from material goods to human values -- children and their families. This would not mean an increased amount of spending but only a shifting of where the money is spent. Even if it did amount to additional spending-- our nation has only to gain by investing in its future.

Another recommendation was to establish immediately a Department of Children and Youth at Cabinet level. We now have an Office of Child Development, which includes the Children's Bureau. Under legislation for the Children's Bureau, they investigate and report upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of our people. During the White House Conference a Children's Lobby was established. This is an association of individuals and/or organizations who have united to promote public support of programs which will benefit family life and development of children, the creation of opportunities for youth and the improvement of settings in which children live and grow. If the Children's Bureau is doing its job, surely the Bureau and the Children's Lobby could keep focus on the problems and needs of our children. I would not presume to take national priority from the children, but we should look closely at what is already available, and if necessary make changes within their structure to do the job for today and the future.

Our FORUM also recommended that no new large institution be built for our young people in trouble, and gradually the institutions now in use be replaced by small homelike facilities, with trained, concerned personnel, in the communities. Our primary focus in working with the child in trouble should be if at all possible to keep him in his own home, with social services available for the child and his family. If the cause of the problem is the home, parents or environment, then it would facilitate rehabilitation to be able to place the child in another homelike facility within the community. This would eliminate the transition from the institution to the community, or even worse, back to the environment which was one of the basic causes of the problem.

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Early prevention of crime and delinquency is another priority. Early prevention includes adequate family income legislation, health care, individualized education, and early identification of problem behavior. Rigidity of curriculum, methods of correction and suspension in the schools came in for their share of blame as a cause of some juvenile problems.

There is a need to improve the nation's system of child justice. There are those who would abolish the juvenile court system, and put the cases of children in trouble in the hands of a social service agency. The principles of the juvenile court are just -- the problems are many. We need judges who are more concerned, better trained in juvenile work, and more and better trained probation officers to do the job. There is a training program for juvenile judges at the University of Nevada, and it is the recommendation of the National Council of Juvenile Court Judges that more judges attend this school. In many States, work of the judges is monitored by a judge from the Supreme Court of that State, and admonished if he is not doing the best job possible. Montana does not have any requirements for the position of probation officer, and the case load in many districts is such that he could not do an adequate job with or without training. Many states not only recommend that there be a B.A. in the behavioral sciences, but a M.A. degree for a probation officer. We need to raise our requirements for the position and back this with an adequate salary.

We could, as in other States, develop our own conception of the Youth Service Bureau, whereby the referral source (parents, school, or police) would bring cases to the bureau, and they in turn would ascertain what referral services were necessary for that child, and would coordinate those services. The police would only take those cases which would be punishable as crimes if committed by adults or repeated serious misconduct cases, directly to the juvenile court.

In Montana the judge can make use of a juvenile advisory committee. As it stands, this committee can be informed about cases before the juvenile court, and make recommendations which are not necessarily binding upon the court. Since community awareness is needed, it would seem that this juvenile advisory committee could extend their duties to include being an advocate for the child and the juvenile justice system.

Montana can be thankful that we do not have, or at least to as great an extent, many of the problems of some other States. We do not have huge institutions. Our two institutions do make available therapeutic services to our children. We have developed a fine aftercare division, with an increase of men working in the field, and the development of group homes for the child who has been in an institution. We are beginning to hear of pre-delinquent homes, and legal juvenile defender programs. We have a training program for our law enforcement personnel. Special courses should be offered for those handling juvenile cases, and more requirements be placed in the hiring of juvenile officers. Most of our police officers, probation officers, and judges are fine people and do the best job that they can. However, we need more of them -- better trained, better paid, and not overworked. The job ahead is community awareness and involvement, for the goal of early prevention!

FORUM 24

The CHILD ADVOCATE

Mabelle Hardy

Reactions to Recommendations

In reporting on the White House Conference on Children it seems important first to set forth what took place in my FORUM. FORUM 24, "The Child Advocate", had the task of exploring mechanisms to insure that children are adequately represented and properly advised of their rights and privileges under law and trying to determine whether adequate representation is provided for children in both judicial and non-judicial settings. Ably chaired by Judge James J. Delaney, District Judge, 17th Judicial District, Brighton, Colorado, the FORUM workshops considered the recommendations made by the original FORUM members. The concluding recommendations to the Conference were: "to establish immediately a high level, independent office of child advocacy, with a network of advocacy."

1. Cost of program to be paid from Federal tax monies with provision for use of other supplemental funds, without requirement for matching funds.
2. States, local communities and neighborhoods can develop their own programs.
3. Local councils shall be structured to maintain effective citizen control while providing active participation of community agencies and organizations concerned with the child.

The role of the child advocate was defined: He "should act as an ombudsman for children and youth. He should be oriented, identifiable and highly visible to the people of the community. He must be accorded considerable discretion, freedom and mobility, given training, be aware of and fully versed in the wide range of community services--legal, family, court, medical and educational. He must be ready to take the initiative in aggressively seeking out the children and youth in his community who are or potentially may be in need or trouble. He would first use existing services but aggressively pursue solutions if in his judgment there has been a failure to act by existing agencies."

The proposition of advocacy as encompassed in the FORUM's adopted definition seems to me to be entirely acceptable as necessary to meet the needs of all children in today's society. This function as matchmaker between child and society thus includes helping the institutions of the society to serve the needs of children as well as helping families of children to know how to use existing services.

There are some serious questions in my mind involved in establishing a new bureaucratic Federal structure to do the job which a multitude of existing services should be doing. It therefore appears to me that the whole

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philosophy of advocacy for children in Montana might be implemented immediately by using the existing Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth as the coordinating body to initiate advocacy programs.

Overall Appraisal

Because of the structuring of the Conference in task-oriented FORUMS, there was a pervasive feeling that certain "overriding concerns" might be overlooked in the final recommendations to the President. Four of these overriding concerns should be given priority: 1) The development of programs to eliminate the racism which cripples all children 2) Improve the nation's system of child justice so law responds in timely, positive ways to needs of children 3) Comprehensive family oriented child development programs including health services, day care, and early childhood education 4) Reordering of national priorities beginning with a guaranteed basic family income adequate for the needs of children.

The Conference must, it seems to me, be viewed by delegates as a privileged opportunity to share in problem-solving with some of the finest minds and most imaginative and dedicated persons in the country. To view the Conference as conclusive would be naive. What was learned, what took place, and what evolved must be translated into action in our home communities. We must not wait for Federal this and Federal that.

Significant Happenings in Montana

As stated earlier, the continuation of the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth will provide the vehicle for translating recommendations into action for Montana. In many of our communities there are people who are being child advocates in a sense. For example, the "Free School" concept evolving in Missoula as an outreach for youths who are "lost". Also, the extension courses in Mental Health for Teachers through which teachers are being equipped to deal with and offer support to troubled children in their classrooms.

Specific Action in Montana

In concluding this report, I would urge that the Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth be retained, strengthened, and assigned the task of furthering the implementation of whatever recommendations resulting from the White House Conference seem to be appropriate to Montana's situation.

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ABOUT the LAW: COMMUNICATING the LAW'S MESSAGE to CHILDREN

Lois McMeekin

Reactions to Recommendations

"That cross-cultural, participatory experiences must be provided for all children so they may understand the concepts and goals of justice in terms of human relations; and that community decision-making processes and educational experiences must provide for the participation and knowledge necessary for a personal, realistic commitment to the democratic system!"

Specific recommendations for implementing the above include:

1. A well-defined, inclusive in-service indoctrination and training for all school personnel. The stress on the need for beginning with administration personnel came, not from educators, but from law enforcement personnel.
2. An intensive and extensive continuing, on-going effort to involve family groups in "participatory experiences". Here, we shared ideas for implementing this recommendation in rural communities miles from any municipality, through the spectrum to communities where the number of teachers and administrators in the system exceeded the population of Helena.
3. Co-ordination within each community, of the home-church-school-civic programs which offer possibilities for providing experiences which will offer an understanding of "the concepts and goals of justice in terms of human relations"-- with recognition of, and particular emphasis on, types of activities which involve the family, whether it be the "ideal", two-parent, or the compromise, one-parent, family unit--or other forms--e.g., guardian, foster home, group home....

As I was faced with the task of ranking the overriding concerns submitted by the 25 FORUMS and the various Minority Caucuses, and with the equally arduous assignment of ranking the FORUM recommendations, my feeling of gratitude and satisfaction grew, for FORUM 25 had succeeded in "zeroing in" on a recommendation, and Workshop D, within this FORUM, had hammered out specific guidelines for action to implement said recommendation, without calling for the action which the majority of FORUMS seemed to center on-- "...massive infusion of Federal funds", "...immediate, massive funding for development of alternative optional forms of public education", and other recommendations dependent on extensive funding.

It is most significant, I feel, that the majority of the 25 FORUMS, working independently, arrived at some common conclusions. It is equally significant that in most cases, at least, these conclusions were not in the "working papers" which we were sent shortly before the opening of the Conference; thus, these conclusions do truly represent the thinking of the participants from the 50 States, who gathered to consider the concerns of our children, from conception to age 13.

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There were several of the OVERRIDING CONCERNS and the SPECIFIC FORUM RECOMMENDATIONS which centered around the need for "cracking open the shell" of the omnibus Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and creating two new Departments with Cabinet status--one on Health and one on Education or, as some groups specified, a Department of Children and Youth or "Department of Family and Children with Cabinet status: State and local councils--all adequately funded. Details of other FORUM recommendations regarding Departments with Cabinet status may be found in the "Results of Balloting..." release, from the White House Conference on Children.

Concern was expressed throughout the Conference, from all of the Clusters, that machinery for implementation of the recommendations be activated, and that the stated intentions for regional, State, and local follow-through be realized.

Specific Action in Montana

The most effective method for accomplishing the follow-through in Montana, I feel, is through utilization of the already established and active Montana Advisory Committee on Children and Youth. This would necessitate provision for continuation of this Committee, and, hopefully, incorporation of the recommendations of our White House Conference Delegation, regarding revolving membership, funding, and provision for it being a genuinely representative group.

Within the area of concern in which I am presently most involved--classroom experiences--there are several possibilities for action. At the present time, through the curriculum evaluation committees, the local chapter of the International Reading Association, the Helena Education Association, and the Montana Education Association, there are and will be opportunities for sharing and for application within Montana, of some of the findings of the Conference.

Significant Happening in Montana

The most promising development in Montana, relating to the FORUM in which I participated--"The Law: Communicating Its Message to Children"--is the trend toward broader training, and encouragement of in-service training, for law enforcement personnel. The LEEP grant and plans for its use, discussed briefly during the first week in the new year, in our local paper, indicates there is recognition of the need for all groups of our law enforcement personnel to be exposed to, and have experience in developing provision for, the broader "concepts and goals of justice in terms of human relations", referred to in the FORUM 25 recommendation.

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MONTANA DELEGATES

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN

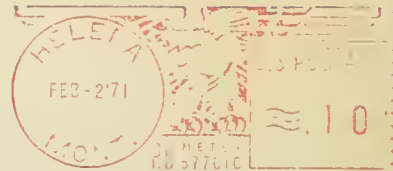
December 13 - 18, 1970

Washington, D.C.

These names and addresses are provided so that Montana citizens and groups can draw upon the delegates for more information and for help to solve problems and improve situations which affect children and youth in Montana.

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